

L&PS New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety

Division of Gaming Enforcement

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Atlantic City Man Receives Extended Sentence for Casino Theft

TRENTON -- A thief with a long record of offenses in New Jersey casinos was sentenced to 10 years in New Jersey state prison today, Attorney General John J. Farmer, Jr. and Division of Criminal Justice Director Kathryn Flicker announced.

Director Flicker said that James Perry, 37, of Atlantic City, received an extended term sentence today following his conviction on February 15, 2001, of third-degree Theft from the Person and third-degree Escape. Perry, who was found guilty after a three-day trial in Atlantic County Superior Court before Judge Albert J. Garofolo, was sentenced to 10 years in New Jersey state prison with five years of parole ineligibility for the Theft conviction and four years in New Jersey state prison for the Escape conviction. The sentences will run consecutively.

"I am pleased that the successful prosecution resulted in an extended sentence. A person who routinely puts other people at risk for his personal gain deserves to spend significant time away from the public," Director Flicker said.

According to Director Flicker, on May 14, 2000, James Perry sat down next to the victim, a 56 year-old male from Beechwood, NJ, who was playing a slot machine. Perry reached into the victim's pocket and removed a wad of currency. The victim grabbed hold of Perry and immediately began yelling, drawing the attention of a slot attendant, who summoned casino security. Perry then broke free and began to flee the casino. The security guard lunged at him but missed and fell to the ground.

Division of Gaming Enforcement (DGE) Director John Peter Suarez said that Perry was arrested outside of the casino by the Atlantic City Police Department, and brought to the DGE holding cell in the Hilton. When State Police detectives assigned to the DGE finished questioning Perry and were preparing to transport him to the Atlantic County jail, he fled the DGE office, shoving a security guard who encountered him, but he was caught and detained by the detectives before leaving the area.

During Perry's trial Deputy Attorney General Jill Moyer of the Division of Criminal Justice's Casino Prosecutions Bureau presented surveillance tape of the incident as well as testimony from New Jersey State Police and Atlantic City Police Department personnel, a Hilton Casino Security officer and the victim. Perry has also been indicted by Casino Prosecutions on two other theft from the person incidents, which occurred at the Tropicana casino. DAG Moyer filed a motion with the court to impose enhanced penalties because in addition to the two Casino Prosecutions indictments, Perry has four prior criminal convictions for robbery and theft-related offenses, three of which also occurred in the Atlantic City casinos. Perry just recently finished serving a 10 year sentence with a five year period of parole ineligibility on his most recent robbery conviction.

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